

jump itself. The mission was specifically to jump behind enemy lines to distract the Nazis and seize important strategic or key terrain and to disrupt the Nazi reinforcements. Their heroism and success were ultimately crucial to the allied victories at Omaha Beach, at Juno, at Sword, and at Gold.

When we arrived in Bayeaux, we were greeted by the President of the French Senate. We had the opportunity to have lunch there with 33 members of their Senate. We also met with the town mayor, and many of the town citizens came out to speak of this. I don't speak French, but as I went over to the side and shook hands and introduced myself to an interpreter, immediately a smile came on their faces with an expression of appreciation and thanks.

Among the people we had the opportunity to meet were many survivors of war who had been small children at the time of the occupation. They did recall D-day and the American GIs who liberated their villages.

They treated us to a wonderful luncheon that day and, once again, representing America as officials, U.S. Senators from America, we were showered with praise and thanks, as well as a promise of continued friendship and alliance. This was a group of French Senators, so I did not expect that at the time, but that is what we received.

Our final event for the day was also very special. It was the multinational ceremony at Arromanches. We were joined by gatherings of heads of state from around the world, senior officials from countries around the world, and a number of our allied nations. We watched a whole range of demonstrations by various multinational military marching units. We had flyovers occur where a number of these nations demonstrated the very best of their aircraft in precision flights overhead. They had a wonderful multimedia presentation that combined the best of dance and video and audio to recount that history of World War II with a very special focus on Normandy.

During the final ceremony of the day, in which President Chirac delivered remarks, we did have the opportunity to reflect on those larger contours of the war and how America and her allies united to defeat tyranny and oppression.

As we sat among the survivors of D-day and as we listened to America's veterans recount their fears and exploits, I could not help but draw comparisons between the veterans of World War II and our proud troops serving abroad today, the very same troops which 2 days prior my colleagues and I had the opportunity to visit in Baghdad and in Kuwait. The parallel is there, not just because of the temporal relationship, but because of both groups' commitment to freedom and democracy and to a better life for others.

America was blessed in World War II on that June 6th, so long ago, yet so

close, as it is now, to have the very same soldiers who have that strong character, who have that courage, that boldness, and that determination. Young patriots, then, as now, answered the call of duty, and through their bravery and through their selfless determination, they fought and they won the battle for freedom and security.

It was these traits that inspired a whole succession of American Presidents, including the late President Reagan to whom we paid tribute 2 weeks ago. He believed in a Europe and a world whole and free of the shadow of communism. The "greatest generation" threat involved nazism and fascism. For nearly 50 years, America confronted another hegemonic ideology, that being communism. Under the leadership and vision of President Reagan, we emerged from the cold war victorious and, as Margaret Thatcher rightly reminds us, without firing a single shot.

Today, we do fight a different enemy, but one that is no less ruthless, no less determined, no less uncompromising than our enemies of those wars past.

Once again, we must stay the course. Once again, we must have faith in our Armed Forces. Once again, we must hold tightly to the belief that freedom will prevail. That is our challenge. That is our calling. And I truly believe, like generations before us, we will look evil squarely in the eye, and we will not flinch, we will not run. We will gather up our courage to press forward. We will gather up our courage to press forward and defeat the forces of terror and secure the blessings of democracy.

AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, on a separate issue, I want to comment on an issue I mentioned this morning in opening the U.S. Senate, an issue that centers on something very close to my heart, and that is the continent of Africa.

I have had the opportunity to travel to Africa this year, to a number of African countries, and the year before that, and the year before that, and the year before that. Indeed, I have had the opportunity to travel to the continent of Africa yearly for the last several years.

In each case, with maybe one or two exceptions where I went as an official, I have had the opportunity to travel to Africa as part of a medical mission group, where I have the real privilege of being able to interact with the peoples of Africa—whether it is in Kenya, or Tanzania, or Uganda, or the Sudan; the Sudan is where I usually go—by delivering health care and medicine, and performing surgery, which is what I happen to do when I visit with peoples who might not otherwise have access to that health care.

I mention that only because it allows me to be able to talk to real people, not just as an official or a VIP coming

in, not as somebody wearing a suit from the United States of America, but to have the opportunity to interact with real people in that doctor-patient relationship. I say doctor-patient relationship; really it is a friend-to-friend relationship. You hear stories, and you really cut through superfluous aspects of people's lives and go right to the heart of what affects them in their lives.

It really comes down to how they can provide for their families, how they can get a job, how they can earn an income, and how they can, in a very primitive way but a very real way, make the lives of their children better than theirs—the same desires we all have as Americans.

I am talking about people in the bush, people in the heart of Africa, people 1,000 miles south of Khartoum and 500 miles west of the Nile River, way in the bush. When you talk to people, you realize they struggle with the exact same things we do, and that is, dignity; that is, a concept of self-worth.

Also, I had the opportunity to travel to Uganda and Kenya and throughout East and Central Africa. What people will tell you is that policy in the United States makes a difference in their lives; that is, policy over the last several years. You may ask them: How do you know what we do? They know that a bill that was passed on the floor of the Senate and the House of Representatives not too many years ago, signed by President Clinton, called the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, has made a difference in their lives.

Indeed, that particular act, passed by the Senate, has created at least 150,000 jobs. When President Museveni from Uganda was here, he said, no, it is more than that. It is 300,000 jobs. But the point is, thousands and thousands of jobs have been created in Africa because of legislation that passed on this floor. And a little bit later tonight, hopefully in a few minutes, it will be passed on this floor once again.

I mentioned a few minutes ago I called Congressman CHARLIE RANGEL. I did that to congratulate him because he has spearheaded, along with many of his colleagues in the House of Representatives, this particular bill, a bill that is called H.R. 4103, the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004. AGOA simply stands for African Growth and Opportunity Act.

The bill we will be addressing here tonight extends the AGOA preference by 7 years, from 2008 to 2015, and, more importantly, it extends the third country fabric provisions that were due to expire this year for another 3 years.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act authorizes the President to provide duty-free treatment for certain articles imported from sub-Saharan African countries. It also provides duty- and quota-free access to the U.S. market for apparel made from U.S. fabric, yarn, and thread.

The program has been a huge success for U.S. policy toward sub-Saharan Africa. AGOA has helped expand African

trade. It has created jobs, as I mentioned. It has brought about improvements in economic conditions that will be realized in a very sustained way throughout Africa. Expanded trade, as we all know, not only helps sub-Saharan African countries develop this sustainable economic base, but it also leads to efficient government practices, to transparency, and to political stability.

U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa increased 13 percent from 2002 to 2003. It has created jobs. The United States, today, is sub-Saharan Africa's largest single export market, accounting for 26 percent of the region's total exports in 2001 alone. U.S. imports under AGOA have almost doubled between 2001 and 2003—up to the 2003 level of over \$13 billion.

One African leader described the program as “the greatest friendship act” by the U.S. Government towards Africa. In fact, the program has been so well received and effective in Africa that the European Union is now reexamining its preference program for Africa in light of AGOA's success.

So, Mr. President, I am pleased that we are going to address this legislation tonight. Again, having spent so much time in Africa, it is with great pride that I congratulate my colleagues for addressing this important issue tonight.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, it will still be a few minutes before we close tonight, and I do want to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues for all the tremendous work they have done over the course of this week. It has been a very busy week. But tomorrow we will be leaving on a recess for several days for the Fourth of July, and we can look back over the course of the past week with the satisfaction that we accomplished passage of a number of bills I will mention in a few minutes.

But two very significant pieces of legislation that address where the focus of the United States is and should be—and that is, the defense of our country, and the support of our troops overseas and the support of our troops here—are the Defense authorization bill, with passage yesterday, and the Defense appropriations bill, with passage today.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

POLITICS OF COMMON GROUND

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I want to talk, if I can, about another matter

to which I have given a great deal of thought. I would like to share some thoughts with my colleagues on it this afternoon.

I would like to begin by referencing a trip I took last weekend. I traveled to Kuwait, Jordan, and Iraq with Senators BIDEN and GRAHAM. We went to Baghdad to talk with coalition and Iraqi leaders as they prepare for the historic transfer of sovereignty to Iraq 6 days from today. We went to thank our troops who are making enormous sacrifices, braving extraordinary risks every minute of the day. We wanted to assure them they have the support and respect of every Member of the Senate and all Americans.

Our trip was especially productive because of the experiences and insights of the Senators with whom I traveled. Senator JOE BIDEN, the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has been a leading voice in the Senate on foreign policy issues for now almost a quarter century.

Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM has quickly established himself as one of the most authoritative and independent voices on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Senator GRAHAM, as we all know, is a colonel and a Reserve judge in the Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals. He and I have been working together for more than a year to improve health care benefits to National Guard members and their families. I know from working with him on the TRICARE bill that he is fiercely committed to American troops and American veterans.

LINDSEY GRAHAM is a proud Republican. JOE BIDEN and I are proud Democrats. But we are all, first and foremost, proud Americans. We are all committed to the safety of our troops. We all want the Iraqi people to succeed in building a stable, free, and pluralistic Iraq. It is in their interest, but it is also in America's interest and, I would argue, the world's interest.

Our trip to Iraq reminded me again how much this Senate and the American people benefit when we are able to focus on the problems that unite us.

No one who saw it will ever forget the cloudless, deep blue sky on the morning of September 11. Pilots have a term for visibility conditions on days like that—they call it “severe clear.”

We all saw it clearly that day. We saw horrific acts of inhumanity, but we also saw, with equal clarity, countless acts of nobility and compassion. We saw beyond the labels of race, income, gender, and the other distinctions that too often divide us.

We are more alike than we are different. All Americans want to live in a world that is safe and secure and just. Whether we're Republicans or Democrats, or don't care one whit about politics, all Americans want to be able to earn enough to care for our families' basic needs. After a lifetime of working hard, all Americans want to be able to retire with dignity and security. All Americans need affordable health care.

All Americans want to be able to send their children to good schools; that is not simply a Democratic or Republican aspiration, it is a necessity for our children's future and the economic, political, and social well-being of our Nation.

These are dangerous and challenging times, but Americans have faced danger and challenges before, and we must always remember that we have emerged stronger when we have faced those challenges together. We are stronger together than separately.

This afternoon, I want to talk about how I believe the Members of the Senate can work together more constructively to solve the big challenges facing our country today.

The result of all-or-nothing politics is too often nothing. We owe the American people better than that.

I believe in what I like to call the Politics of Common Ground. Practicing the Politics of Common Ground does not mean betraying one's principles. We can bend on details without abandoning our basic beliefs. The Politics of Common Ground is pragmatic, not dogmatic. It recognizes there can be different ways to reach the same goal. It puts our common interests ahead of personal or partisan interests. Instead of narrow ideological victories, the politics of common ground seeks broad, principled compromise.

I recognize some people may think this timing is strange, to talk about searching for common ground now in the midst of campaign season. But I actually believe it is exactly the right time.

The truth is, no one knows which party will control the Senate next year, or the House, or the White House, so neither party can be accused of embracing these ideas for partisan advantage.

The Politics of Common Ground rests on four fundamental commitments. Obviously it takes at least two to seek common ground. Neither party can make these principles work alone. If Democrats hold the majority in the next Senate, these are the four fundamental principles by which we would seek to govern:

First, deal in good faith with the executive branch, regardless of which party holds the majority.

Second, preserve and fulfill the historical role of the Senate regarding budgetary responsibilities, oversight, and advice and consent on nominees, regardless of which party holds the majority.

Third, respect the rights of the minority and seek to work in good faith with them.

Fourth, end the cycle of partisan retaliation.

This week marks the 40th anniversary of the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, one of the greatest common ground victories in our Nation's history.

It was a Democratic President, Lyndon Johnson, who signed the Civil